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CIA NOMINEE ACCUSED OF IRANSCAM LIES, BLUNDERS

WASHINGTON — Congress turned up the heat on President Reagan's Iranian scandal yesterday as one committee voted to cut off aid to the Nicaraguan contras and another accused Reagan's nominee for CIA director of lying and incompetence.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 11 to 9 to stop payment of \$40 million in U.S. aid to the contras. The aid has been approved by Congress, but has not been spent.

Profits from U.S. arms sales to Iran were illegally diverted to the contras, angering the Democratically controlled Committee.

Congress is expected to pass the bill and Reagan is expected to veto it. But yesterday's vote indicated Reagan's prospects for winning more contra aid next year are bleak.

Meanwhile, Robert Gates, deputy director of the CIA and Reagan's nominee to replace the ailing William Casey in the agency's No. 1 slot, concluded nearly nine hours of grilling by the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Gates was attacked for his role in the Iranian scandal, which he says he knew nothing about until undecipherable hints started crossing his desk one month before the

By RACHEL FLICK

scandal broke in November.

Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) accused Gates of "dissembling" about his role in preparing "uninformative, and really misleading" testimony for Casey to read to Congress.

Gates defended the testimony as "a fair statement of what we knew at the time."

Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.) blasted Gates for responding to the first hints of Iranscam by telling other officials at the CIA and the National Security Council instead of pursuing them himself.

"You basically passed the buck," Bradley said.

"Now we can argue five months later that I didn't do enough," Gates responded angrily, saying he transferred the information "into the hands of those who are better prepared to evaluate" it.



ROBERT GATES: Blasted for preparing "uninformative and misleading" testimony on the Iran arms scandal.